

NEWS RELEASE



OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

San Diego, California

*United States Attorney
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For Immediate Release

NEWS RELEASE SUMMARY - March 13, 2006

United States Attorney Carol C. Lam announced that Guillermo Romero-Flores and Guadalupe Ventura were sentenced today in United States District Court in San Diego by the Honorable Thomas J. Whelan for convictions arising out of harboring and transporting aliens for prostitution. Judge Whelan sentenced Romero-Flores and Ventura to serve 27 months and 41 months in custody, respectively. During the sentencing hearing, Judge Whelan found that the trafficked women were themselves victims who were afraid of the defendants.

A federal jury returned guilty verdicts on May 13, 2005, convicting Romero-Flores and Ventura of two counts of Harboring Aliens, and two counts of Harboring Aliens for Purposes of Prostitution. The jury also convicted Ventura of one count of Bringing in an Alien for Financial Gain, and one count of Transporting an Alien for Purposes of Prostitution.

According to Assistant U.S. Attorney Christopher P. Tenorio, who handled the government's prosecution along with Civil Rights Division, Department of Justice Trial Attorney Marcia Jackson, the

evidence at trial established that Romero-Flores and Ventura harbored illegal aliens in the United States in order to profit from their services as prostitutes.

United States Attorney Lam said, "The defendants didn't just smuggle aliens; they victimized them. Our local Human Trafficking Task Force will continue to identify and prosecute people who exploit others in this way."

The case was the product of a joint investigation by the Immigration and Customs Enforcement and the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

DEFENDANTS

Case Number: 03CR3347

Guillermo Romero-Flores

Guadalupe Ventura

SUMMARY OF CHARGES

Counts 1 & 2 8 U.S.C. § 1324(a)(1)(A)(iii) and (v)(II) (Harboring Aliens, and Aiding and Abetting)

Maximum penalty: 10 years' custody; \$250,000 Fine

Counts 3 & 4 8 U.S.C. § 1328 & 18 U.S.C. § 2 (Harboring Aliens For Purposes of Prostitution, and Aiding and Abetting)

Maximum penalty: 10 years' custody; \$250,000 Fine

Count 5 8 U.S.C. § 1324(a)(2)(B)(ii) & 18 U.S.C. § 2 (Transportation of Illegal Alien for Financial Gain, and Aiding and Abetting)

Minimum penalty: 3 years' custody

Maximum penalty: 10 years' custody; \$250,000 Fine

Count 6 18 U.S.C. § 2421 & 18 U.S.C. § 2 (Transportation For Purposes of Prostitution, and Aiding and Abetting)

Maximum penalty: 10 years' custody; \$250,000 Fine

AGENCIES

Department of Homeland Security, Immigration and Customs Enforcement

Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation